



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY
Richard M. Flynn, Commissioner
Division of Fire Safety
Office of the State Fire Marshal
J. William Degnan, State Fire Marshal
Office: Richard M. Flynn Academy, Route 106, Concord, NH
Mailing Address: 33 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03305
603/271-3294, FAX 603/271-1091



For Immediate Release
Contact: Bill Degnan
603-271-3294

FIRE MARSHAL URGES CAUTION WITH HOME FIREWORKS

CONCORD, N.H. State Fire Marshal J. William Degnan urges anyone planning to celebrate the Fourth of July holiday with home fireworks to use extreme caution to avoid injury and particularly to keep fireworks out of the hands of children.

Fireworks are explosive devices, Degnan said. They can cause serious injury if misused or handled carelessly. They should only be handled by responsible adults.

He noted that state law allows anyone who is 21 or older to purchase legal or permissible fireworks and display them on private property with the written permission of the owner, except in municipalities that prohibit their use. Anyone selling permissible fireworks is required to provide purchasers with a pamphlet, approved by the Commissioner of Safety, detailing the safe and appropriate use of the fireworks being sold.

Degnan stressed that fireworks should only be used in a safe, open area, as far away from buildings as possible. He offered the following safety tips for people who want to use permissible fireworks in communities where they are legal:

- * Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- * Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- * Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- * Only light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves or flammable materials.
- * Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- * Keep a bucket of water handy in case of a malfunction or fire.

Degnan particularly urged parents not to put sparklers in the hands of small children.

The wires of sparklers get very hot and small pieces of burning metal can fly off and hit a child in the eye, on the skin or onto their clothing, which could ignite, he said.

Degnan suggested celebrating the Fourth of July holiday by leaving fireworks displays to professionals.